

Northwest Nevada is a big, quiet space, free from the noise and congestion of urban living. This is high desert and mountain country. The lowest elevation is 4,000 feet and Star Peak, in the Humboldt Range, is the highest at 9,834 feet. This is where a person can have the whole place to themselves.

Public lands in northwest Nevada are managed by the Bureau of Land Management's Winnemucca Field Office (BLM), the US, Forest Service's Humboldt Toiyabe National Forest, Santa Rosa Ranger District and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The BLM manages 8.5 million acres, the Forest Service manages 280,000 acres and the Fish and Wildlife Service manages the Sheldon, Still waterand Falon national wildlife refuges in this area.

The majority of precipitation falls during September to April. Annual rainfall varies from four inches in the valleys to over 20 inches in the mountains. Normally, this area is snow free from June to October, but unseasonal snow storms are a possibility.

Recreation

Since so few of the dirt roads and trails are marked, the BLM suggests visitors purchase a 1:100,000 land status map and U.S. Geological Service quad sheet for the area you plan to visit. These maps are available for \$4 each at BLM offices.

Fishing

Fishable streams in the Winnemucca area contain brook, rainbow, brown and Lahontan cut-throat trout The quantity of fish in these streams is small and heavy fishing can deplete the populations. Make sure to check local regulations before fishing.

- Rye Patch Reservoir - largemouth bass, smallmouth bass, white bass, walleye, wipers, channel catfish, brown and black bullhead catfish, bluegill, white crappie, yellow perch, Sacramento perch and green sunfish.
- Blue Lakes - brook and cutthroat trout.
- Onion Valley and Knott Creek reservoirs - brook and rainbow trout.
- Big Springs Reservoir- rainbow and cutthroat hybrid trout.
- Chimney Reservoir - brown, rainbow and cut-throat trout, largemouth bass, channel catfish, white crappie and walleye.
- Dufurrena Pond - largemouth bass, white crappie, bluegill, yellow perch and redear sunfish.
- Bilk Creek Reservoir - rainbow trout
- Humboldt River - largemouth bass, smallmouth bass, white bass, white and channel catfish, brown and black bullhead catfish, walleye, bluegill, white crappie, wiper, yellow perch, green sunfish and Sacramento perch.

Hunting

- Upland bird and big game hunting are among the most popular recreation activities in the area.
- Bird species include pheasant, California quail, Hungarian partridge, sage grouse, waterfowl, dove and chukar.
- Mule deer and pronghorn are the primary big game species. Bighorn sheep and mountain lion are also hunted.

Fishing

Fishing and hunting regulations are subject to change. Check with the Nevada Division of Wildlife for regulations.

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Rockhounding

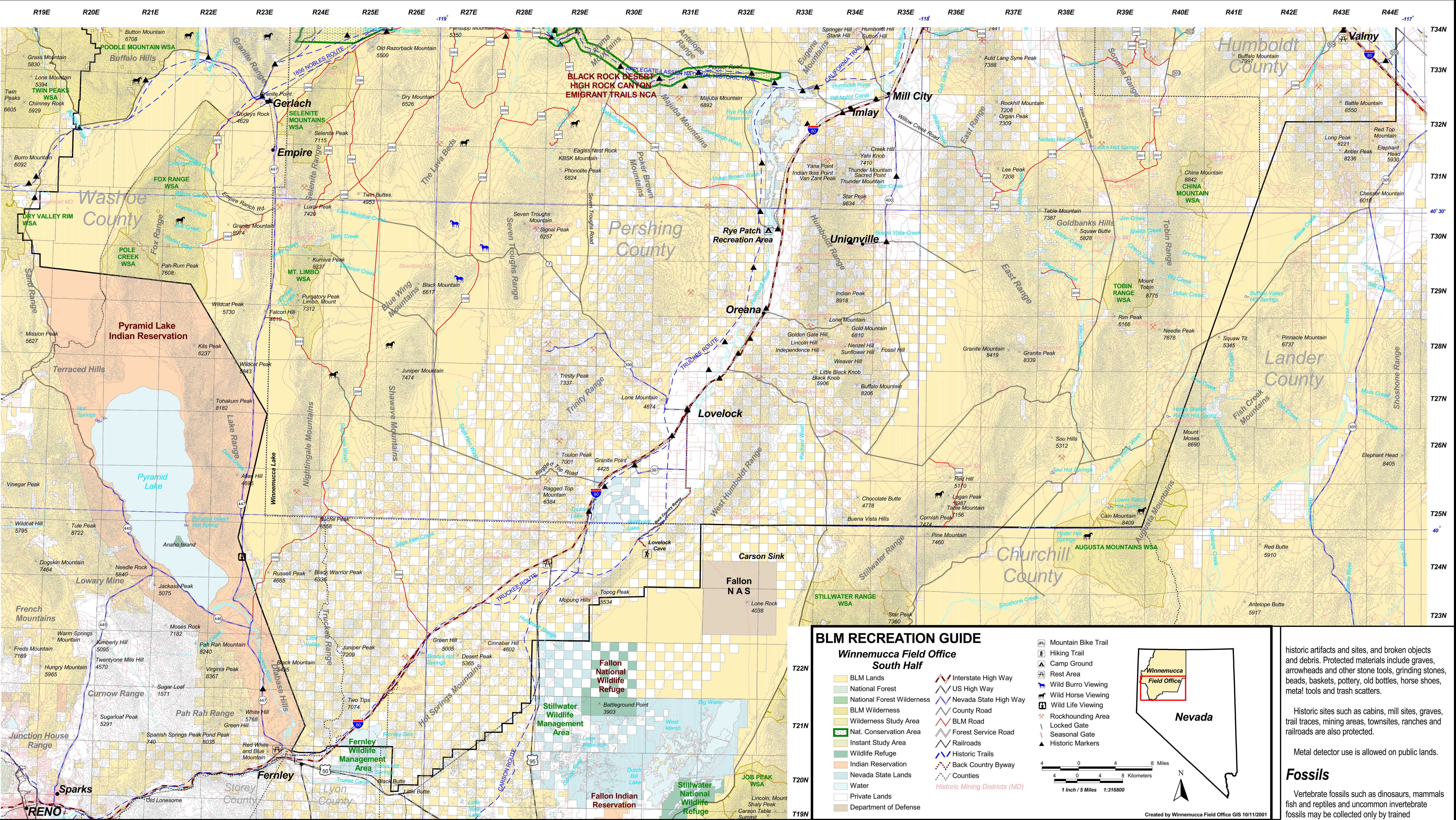
There are many places to rockhound. It is fairly common to find petrified wood, ornamental rock, plant fossils, jasper, agate, fire opal and geodes.

Mining claims on public land must be treated similar to private property: always obtain permission to rockhound on mining claims. Check with the BLM or Forest Service office to find out the status of claims in the area.

Wild Horse and Burro Viewing

Wild horses and burros are descendants of animals released by, or escaped from, Spanish explorers, ranchers, miners, soldiers and Native Americans. A wild horse or burro shows the same characteristics as a domestic horse or burro. But they are wild animals and must be viewed with caution.

The Wild Horse and Burro Act gave the Departments of the Interior and Agriculture responsibility to manage, protect and control wild,



free-roaming horses and burros on public lands. An Important part of managing these animals is the adoption program. For information on adoption call 1-866-4MUSTANGS.

Back Country Byways

Back Country Byways are routes to "get off the beaten track". The Lovelock Cave Back Country Byway begins in Lovelock at the Marzen House Museum. It travels from the small town and its farmlands, through a section of the California National Historic Trail and ends at Lovelock Cave, an important archaeological site. The Byway is a combination of graded gravel and dirt roads, passable by passenger car. Check road conditions at the Marzen House.

Mountain Biking and Hiking

There are numerous dirt roads and single track trails throughout the entire area which offer great mountain biking and hiking opportunities. The

Bloody Shins Trail System is the only designated mountain bike/hiking trail. The trail head begins in northeast Winnemucca at the end of Kluncky Canyon Road. The Winnemucca BLM Office has a brochure map of the Bloody Shins Trails.

Off-Highway Vehicles (OHVs)

It is recommended that OHVs stay on existing roads to minimize impacts to the land. OHV enthusiasts may find a variety of opportunities at a large sand dune area about seven miles north of Winnemucca on U.S. Route 95.

Winter Sports

Hinkey Summit, Water Canyon, Sonoma Canyon, Thomas Canyon and the north side of Winnemucca Mountain offer snowmobiling, cross-country skiing, sledding and snowshoeing when there is enough snow.

Camping

Lye Creek Campground is 60 miles north of Winnemucca in the Santa Rosa Mountains at Hinkey Summit. The campground, nestled in aspen along Lye Creek at 7,400 feet, offers improved camp sites, drinking water and vault toilets. Campers are advised to bring charcoal or a camp stove for cooking since no firewood is available. The campground is usually open from Memorial Day to October 15, depending on snow conditions. Call the Forest Service for more information.

Rye Patch Reservoir Campground, 22 miles north of Lovelock off 1-80, is managed by the Nevada Division of State Parks. The area offer scamping, a boat launch and picnic sites.

Undeveloped campsites are popular with back country travelers. Camping is allowed on most BLM lands unless posted signs state otherwise. Feel free to choose your campsite, but keep in mind Nevada State Law prohibits camping within 300 feet of springs or waterholes used by wildlife, livestock or wild horses and burros. Camping is limited to 14 days at any one site.

Water

No open waters or springs have been tested for potability. All water should be filtered, boiled for 10 minutes or chemically treated.

National Conservation Area (NCA)

The Black Rock Desert-High Rock Canyon Emigrant Trails NCA Act of 2000 gives special designation to nearly 1.2 million acres: 795,000 acres as national conservation area and 755,000 acres as wilderness. Some wilderness overlaps the NCA boundary.

The Black Rock Desert-High Rock Canyon Emigrant Trails NCA designation protects nationally significant segments of the historic California emigrant trails and unique plant animal and fish species, as well as cultural and natural resources.

National Historic Trails

Today, Interstate 80 follows a route along the Humboldt River similar to the California Trail. This route was used by westward-bound travelers during the 1840s and 1850s. The lure of gold brought an estimated 25,000 emigrants through the Winnemucca area.

After passing the Humboldt Sink, where the Humboldt River recedes underground, the California Trail branches into two routes. The Truckee Trail continued west and the Carson Trail took a southerly route. Both branches passed through the Forty-Mile Desert, where oxen and emigrants perished, and wagons and goods were abandoned.

The Applegate-Lassen Trail branches off the California Trail near Imlay. This trail passed through the Black Rock Desert which presented hardships greater than the Forty-Mile Desert. The Noble's Route, a cutoff of the Applegate-Lassen Trail, was blazed through the Smoke Creek Desert and provided travelers with more water and less rugged terrain.

In 1869, the Central Pacific Railroad was completed and gradually replaced the wagon trains.

Wilderness

The BLM and Forest Service manage wilderness areas so people may enjoy the land's natural beauty with minimal impact. Recreationists may camp, hike, ride a horse, take photos, fish, hunt, backpack, or basically pursue any activity that doesn't require motorized equipment such as all-terrain vehicles and snowmobiles, or mechanical means, such as mountain bikes and game carriers. The exception is wheelchairs, which are allowed where trail conditions permit.

The following wilderness areas are managed by the BLM: Black Rock Desert, North Jackson Mountains, South Jackson Mountains, Pahute Peak, North Black Rock Range, East Fork High Rock Canyon, High Rock Lake, Little High Rock Canyon, High Rock Canyon and Calico Mountains. These wilderness areas are around the Black Rock Desert-High Rock Canyon Emigrant Trails NCA.

The Santa Rosa-Paradise Peak Wilderness is managed by the Forest Service and is located 35 miles north of Winnemucca.

Wilderness Study Area

A wilderness study area (WSA) is a roadless area that has been inventoried by the BLM and found to have wilderness characteristics. WSAs are 5,000 acres or larger, have a natural appearance and offer opportunities for solitude. WSAs may also offer ecological, geological or other features of scientific, educational, scenic or historical value. Vehicles are allowed only on designated ways, which are tracks or routes maintained solely by the passage of vehicles, within wilderness study areas.

Cultural Artifacts

Cultural materials on public lands may not be removed, damaged, disturbed, excavated or transferred without a BLM or Forest Service permit. Cultural resources include prehistoric and

historic artifacts and sites, and broken objects and debris. Protected materials include graves, arrowheads and other stone tools, grinding stones, beads, baskets, pottery, old bottles, horse shoes, metal tools and trash scatters.

Historic sites such as cabins, mill sites, graves, trail traces, mining areas, townsites, ranches and railroads are also protected.

Metal detector use is allowed on public lands.

Fossils

Vertebrate fossils such as dinosaurs, mammals fish and reptiles and uncommon invertebrate fossils may be collected only by trained researchers with a BLM or Forest Service permit. Collected fossils remain the property of all Americans and are placed with museums or other public institutions after study. Common invertebrate fossils such as plants, mollusks and trilobites may be collected for personal use in reasonable quantities, but may not be bartered or sold.

The maximum quantity of petrified wood that any one person is allowed to remove without charge per day is 25 pounds plus one piece, provided that the maximum total removed per person in one calendar year doesn't exceed 250 pounds. Collecting pieces larger than 250 pounds is not allowed. Use of explosives or power equipment to excavate or remove petrified wood is illegal. Petrified wood may not be traded, bartered or sold without permit.

Cave resources, including plant, animal and geologic features, are federally protected and may not be altered, damaged or removed.